

REMARKS

Responsive to the communication mailed on September 4, 2003, Applicants provide the following remarks in an effort to address the issues noted by the Examiner and to more particularly point out and distinctly claim his invention. Applicants submit that by this amendment, no new matter has been added to the application.

Reconsideration and reexamination are, therefore, respectfully requested.

Status of the Claims

By this amendment, claims 53 and 55 have been cancelled and claim 47 has been amended. Thus, claims 32-49, 52, 54, 56-59, 61-70, 72, and 74-83 remain pending in the application.

Rejections under 35 USC § 103 (a)

Claims 47-49, 52-54, and 56-58 stand rejected under 35 USC § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kleiner (US 2,610,347) in view of Federico et al. (US 5,630,253). To address this rejection, Applicants have amended independent claim 47 (the base claim) to incorporate all of the limitations of former claims 53 and 55, which are now canceled. This is in connection with the Examiner's suggestion (on page four of the Office Action) to amend claim 55, deemed allowable, if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim (claim 47) and any intervening claims (claim 53). By amending claim 47 in this manner, claim 47 now equates to claim 55 rewritten in independent form to include all the limitations of the base claims and any intervening claims. Furthermore, claims 48, 49, 52-54, and 56-58 now depend either directly or

indirectly from claim 47, which Applicants believe is an allowable base claim, as said claim has been amended in connection with the Examiner's suggestion.

In view of the abovementioned amendment, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 47- 49, 52-54, and 56-58 are now in condition for allowance. Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, all the pending claims are considered to define patentably over the prior art. If, for any reason, the Examiner is inclined to further reject any of the claims, Applicant requests that counsel be contacted to resolve any remaining issues. Reconsideration is requested and favorable action is solicited.

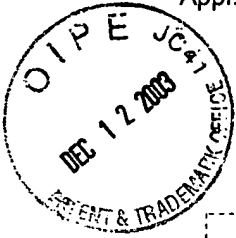
Respectfully submitted,



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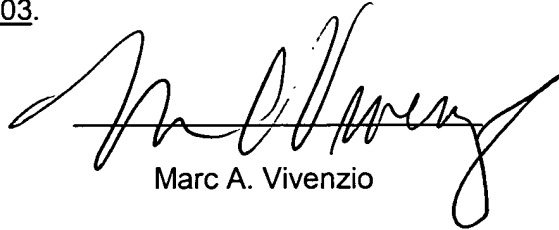
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I hereby certify that this Amendment and Response and any paper or document referred to therein as being attached or enclosed, is being deposited with the U.S. Postal Service as First Class Mail under 37 C.F.R. 1.8 in an envelope addressed to: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Washington D.C. 20231 on December 4, 2003.



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